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# Transportation Division

Shaun Moran

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## Transportation Division

## Shaun Moran, Chair

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The Transportation Division promotes the exchange of knowledge and information in transportation, both in general or in one of its many subdivisions including air, highway, rail, and water transport, and multimodal transportation.



Hello again from the North. How time flies. It seems that over the last three years June has been my busiest month. Not only did I attend SLA's Annual Conference and become chair of the Transportation Division with all that that entails, but my library launched a CD-ROM networking solution in Transport Canada. Last June, we launched our virtual library, and next year we hope to have launched our Canadian Transportation Research Gateway. As you all know, the launch of anything is only the beginning of new and different challenges.

The rest of the summer followed and I started to plan the program for the SLA 2004 annual conference to be held in Nashville. I feel we have made a good start at a program, trying whenever possible to partner with other divisions and chapters. For example, we will co-sponsor a session with the Aerospace Section of the Engineering Division to hear a female combat pilot share her adventures. OCLC has agreed to participate in a session on group services with the Midwest Transportation Knowledge Network. Following up with Mary Ellen Tucker's e-mails on the listserv, we are trying to put together a session on how to manage/obtain gray literature. We are attempting to bring in some international resources for this session. And we have to have some fun! An all-sciences reception (including the Transportation Division) will be held at the Wildhorse Saloon—dust off those cowboy boots and start practicing your line dancing! I hope to see many of you in Nashville.

Unlike Roberto last year, I was not involved in any of the division projects, such as the Midwest Transportation Library Consortium. I have relied on telephone and e-mail to keep in touch with the executive—and with Bonnie Osif, the driving force behind me to organize Transportation Division members to submit to this *Sci-Tech News* issue, focused on our very own Transportation Division. This is when I became aware of how busy we all are! However, I persisted and found Qin Tang, who agreed to interview our friend and colleague Jerry Baldwin. The Jerry we all know and love shines through in this interview. I had first approached our friend Jeanne Thomas to interview Jerry, but she was about to leave for South America and had to decline.

We have two library profiles in this issue—the Transportation Association of Canada and the Harmer E. Davis Transportation Library at the University of California Institute of Transportation. Nelda Bravo has provided her GTRIC summary, and we have an article by John Metcalf. As one of SLA's smaller divisions, we are very impressive!

After working on all of the above and getting my children off to university, my husband and I flew to Europe to see the beautiful cities of Prague and Vienna. This helped us get over our empty-nest syndrome. Hopefully our next trip to Europe will be closer to our international transportation-library friends.

I hope this finds you all well.

Shaun

## Kaleidoscope

### Mike Kleiber retires

Michael Kleiber, the UC Berkeley Transportation Library's longest-serving staff member, retired on September 30, 2003. Mike joined the Institute in 1966, originally as the Library's Chief Cataloger. He became Library Director in 1980 after the retirement of Beverly Hickok (the Library's first director). Mike took early retirement in late 1993 but returned to the Library to work part time as librarian for the PATH database project from 1994 through to this Fall.

### TransDiv Cataloging Workshop at SLA 2003

The Transportation Division's workshop **Where is the catalog going?**, was held on Tuesday June 10 during the 2003 SLA annual conference. Featuring presentations by Gary R. Houk of OCLC and Shelley Hostetler of Endeavor Information Systems the event attracted an overflow crowd. If you missed the meeting or were there and would like to revisit you can find the presentations on the Transportation Division's web pages [www.library.northwestern.edu/transportation/slatran/](http://www.library.northwestern.edu/transportation/slatran/). The direct link can be found at <http://www.library.northwestern.edu/transportation/slatran/newyork.html>.

## The Transportation Division Welcomes These New Members

Adam Barth  
PSEG Services Corporation  
Communications & Research Svcs  
80 Park Plaza  
P3B  
Newark, NJ 07102  
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA  
Phone: 19734305408  
Fax: 19736241551  
Email: [adam.barth@pseg.com](mailto:adam.barth@pseg.com)

Amy Brennan  
1535 Barrington Pl  
Ann Arbor, MI 48103  
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA  
Phone: 17346748512  
Fax:  
Email: [watia@hotmail.com](mailto:watia@hotmail.com)

Kathryn Hemphill  
2620 Woodsprite Ct  
West Linn, OR 970683149  
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA  
Phone: 15036575895  
Fax:  
Email:

Sharon Henry  
Asian Development Bank  
Box 789  
0980 Manila, 0980  
PHILIPPINES  
Phone: 0116326324088  
Fax: 0116326325020  
Email: [shenry@adb.org](mailto:shenry@adb.org)

Caroline Weber  
17533 Amity Dr  
Gaithersburg, MD 20877  
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA  
Phone:  
Fax:  
Email:

Lorette Weldon  
Community Transportation Assn  
1341 G St NW  
10th Fl  
Washington, DC 20005  
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA  
Phone: 1-202-661-0211  
Fax:  
Email: [weldon@ctaa.org](mailto:weldon@ctaa.org)

## **National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) Database Update SLA Annual Conference, New York City by Rita Evans, ITS Library, UC Berkeley**

Dr. Deborah Bruce of the National Transportation Safety Board addressed "Transportation Safety Databases—Accident Records and Exposure Data" at SLA's Annual Conference in New York. Moderated by Jane Watson of the National Transportation Library, the Monday afternoon session was attended by about thirty division members.

Dr. Bruce manages the NTSB Safety Studies and Statistical Analysis Division. The division conducts safety studies in all modes of transportation and is responsible for analyzing and disseminating information from the Safety Board's official aviation accident database.

Using aviation accident data, Dr. Bruce described how NTSB has taken a look at aviation accident events and how we measure exposure to risk. The Accident Data Management System is complex, containing records of 40,000 accidents and incidents that have occurred since 1982. Each record contains up to 650 data elements relating to personnel, aircraft, and the environment.

It is essential that users of this data understand the definitions underlying them. There are very specific conditions to be met, for example, before an incident is described as an "accident" or an injury is considered a "serious injury." In addition, data users need to be aware of what types of aircraft are included. They also need to note whether data is based on a census (every incident is accounted for) or a sample (selected data is extrapolated).

NTSB aviation publications can be found at [www.nts.gov](http://www.nts.gov) and include Annual Aviation Accident Reviews and Safety Studies (usually two per year). For queries about individual accidents or a set of accidents with common features, see [www.nts.gov/nts/query.asp#query\\_start](http://www.nts.gov/nts/query.asp#query_start). This site is particularly good for those not familiar with or adept at using this sort of database.

For more complex queries, Dr. Bruce recommends using downloadable data sets from the NTSB ftp site at <ftp://www.nts.gov/avdata>. This site allows highly customized searches and data aggregation and analysis. It also includes tools for using the database, including a copy of SQL database structure, the coding manual, data dictionaries, and translation tables (not all transportation accident databases provide access to such tools, but they should.)

In looking at accident data, keep in mind that records produced shortly after an accident will be supplemented with additional data. Preliminary data is available within five to ten days, factual data in about six months, and a final report with probable cause twelve to nineteen months after the accident.

Dr. Bruce noted that when searching the accident databases, you should consider your terminology carefully. If you search for "icing," for example, the search results will include all kinds of icing, not just the accumulation of ice on an aircraft wing. In order to execute this search correctly, the search needs to begin with "aircraft," then proceed to "wings" and then to "icing."

An especially tricky part of using the accident data is the meaning of accident rate calculations and how we quantify risk. When trying to determine how many accidents a particular airline has had in a given period of time, for example, the data must be viewed in the context of variables such as how many takeoffs and landings were involved or how many miles were flown. You need to measure exposure, and sometimes that data is not available. There appears to be a disproportionate number of accidents involving fifteen-passenger vans, for example, but without knowing how many opportunities there were for such an accident to occur, this cannot be established.

Dr. Bruce cautioned that data integrity/accuracy can be an issue. If you are looking at data, ask yourself if the activity number makes sense. If the number of flight hours each year appears to jump around but the accident rate holds steady, there may be a problem with data accuracy or a definition may have changed.

In searching for accident information, remember that some questions are simply unanswerable. It is much easier to document structural failure in an aviation accident than to identify fatigue and other human factors. The question of whether cell-phone usage contributes to car crashes may fall into this unanswerable category, and investigators may find it more fruitful to focus on driving distractions in general.

In conclusion, when searching accident data, try to learn something about the idiosyncrasies of the particular database you are using, be careful what terms you use, watch for inconsistencies, and remember not all data is available.

**SLA Transportation Division Annual Board Meeting  
New York City, June 14, 2003  
Minutes**

In attendance:

Shaun Moran, Transport Canada  
Laura Whayne, Kentucky Transportation Center  
Roberto Sarmiento, Northwestern University  
Bonnie Osif, Pennsylvania State University  
Ken Winter, Virginia DOT  
Jean Thomson, Reebie Associates Library  
Roger Garren, National Transportation Library  
Jane Watson, National Transportation Library  
Conrad Kartanas, Shannon & Wilson Inc. Library  
Nelda Bravo, National Transportation Library  
Betty Lou Hicks, Hanson Professional Services  
Dot Finn, GRA  
Rita Evans, UC Berkeley, Institute of Transportation  
Studies Library  
Lynn Matis, Massachusetts State Transportation  
Library

The meeting was called to order at 7:40 a.m. by  
Chair Shaun Moran.

Minutes of the June 2002 Board meeting were  
distributed. Roberto Sarmiento moved to accept  
the minutes, which were approved.

#### **Report of Past Chair**

Past Chair Roberto Sarmiento said that typically,  
about 25% of division members attend the annual  
conference (about 35 attended the 2002  
conference), but he had not been able to obtain  
final registration figures for division members for  
the 2003 conference.

Roberto noted that there were many problems with  
the conference location in New York City, especially  
for a small division such as ours. Not only was  
everything from hotel rooms to meals to meetings  
room expensive, but we often received poor value  
for our money. He also noted problems with  
hardware at some sessions and an inability of hotel  
personnel to deal with such glitches.

On the other hand, the Transportation Division's  
programming for the conference was quite  
successful. The full-day GTRIC session on Sunday  
was well-attended, as was Monday's session on  
NTSB databases. Tuesday's session, "Where Is the  
Catalog Going?" had an overflow crowd, with  
people sitting on the floor. Many division members  
also attended the no-host dinner on Sunday and  
the open house Monday evening.

Roberto asked Bonnie Osif, *Sci-Tech News* Editor,  
to explain why the division does not put book

reviews in the printed bulletin. Bonnie said that  
US Postal Service counts all book reviews as ads,  
and a different postal rate applies to those pages.  
In addition, *SciTech News* has a contract with Book  
News for book reviews that bars it from running  
other reviews. The Chair can spotlight a new  
publication in the Chair's message, but it has to  
be folded into the message in such a way that it  
cannot be construed as an ad.

#### **Treasurer's Report**

Secretary/Treasurer Betty Lou Hicks reported that  
the division has \$14,143.42 in its accounts as of  
May 30, 2003. SLA Headquarters now requires  
divisions to pay 50% of their conference program  
costs by May 15 in order to make sure that  
divisions have sufficient funds to cover their costs.  
The current allotment from membership dues is \$10  
per member at the fiscal year end, with a minimum  
allotment of \$1125.

The Treasurer's report was accepted.

#### **Committee Reports**

**Archives** – Roberto Sarmiento is the new Archives  
Chair. The archives reside in three five-drawer filing  
cabinets and various boxes at Northwestern  
University and it is difficult to find anything. The  
archives includes the chair's business and budget  
reports, copies of *Sci-Tech News* and the division  
bulletins, conference programs and information,  
etc. Laura Whayne said the division's procedures  
manual lists what should go to the archives.  
Roberto will see that the procedures manual is  
posted on the division website.

**Bulletin** – Rita Evans said there was not a great  
deal of activity this year but the Transportation  
Division was represented in all four issues of  
*SciTech News*. Bonnie said she'll run member or  
library profiles. The next issue, August 2003, will  
focus on aerospace. John Gallwey is the new editor.

**Bylaws** – Laura Whayne will continue as committee  
chair. Roberto noted that since the association has  
moved from bylaws to guidelines, divisions can do  
the same. The Transportation Division's bylaws  
were reviewed and updated four years ago – do  
we want to move toward less formal guidelines  
with fewer requirements? Once direction on  
bylaws/guidelines is received from the association,  
a committee will look into whether the division  
needs to do anything. Roberto and Shaun said they  
would work with Laura on this.

**Fundraising** – Dot Finn reported that \$2900 was raised for the New York conference. She reminded us that sponsors must be conference exhibitors in order for us to accept contributions. Dot will work with Ken Winter, who will step in as chair next year; Dot will contact new potential sponsors and Ken will contact existing ones, and they will begin contacting people soon.

**Government Relations** – Roberto reported that Chair Jim Olivetti tried to solicit support from SLA Headquarters for the drive to save the National Transportation Library but there was essentially no response. (Jane Watson noted that the American Library Association did send a letter of support.)

**Long Range Planning** – Jean Thompson and Jane Watson will co-chair this committee, which will now be known as Strategic Planning.

**Membership** – Janet Bix could not attend but will stay on as chair. Division membership has been holding fairly steady at about 185-215 members. The Discussion List is very active but is there a way to get people involved beyond receiving and sending messages? Could we target those who are on the list who are not SLA or Transportation Division members? Several people noted that if we identify those people, personal contact will be much more effective than broadcast messages.

**Networking** – Roberto reported that the division website will be redesigned this summer.

**Nominating** – This year's committee was chaired by Barbara Post. Betty Lou Hicks was nominated as Chair-Elect and Rita Evans as Secretary/Treasurer. Dan Krummes will chair next year's committee, with Jane Watson and Nelda Bravo as committee members.

**Special Projects** – Susan Dresley will stay on as chair; Roger Garren will work with her and will be chair for 2004-2005.

#### **New Business**

**Fundraising – New Sponsors Campaign** – Shaun asked all of us to solicit potential sponsors. Nelda Bravo asked if the division can solicit funds from non-exhibitors to pay for stipends for conference attendees. Roberto thought we can, but Betty Lou Hicks questioned that. In general, SLA will waive this rule only if it means more people can attend,

so the stipend might work. This could enable the division to solicit contributions from organizations such as Caterpillar and 3M which otherwise could not donate funds.

**International Relations Committee – Twinning Project** – This is an association effort to have units sponsor someone outside the US and Canada by paying half of the membership dues for a year. It was felt that it may be better for the division to pursue its traditional outreach efforts to international librarians, especially considering the division's financial situation.

**Transportation Division Book Review** – Roberto reported that Mary Ellen Tucker has proposed putting book reviews on the division website. She is willing to develop a page and solicit reviews, which will be kept on the site indefinitely. The call for reviews will go out on the discussion list.

**Programming for 2004 Conference** – Shaun said she is still looking for some program ideas. Betty Lou cautioned that a small division such as ours should be careful about not over-committing for programming due to a limited pool of volunteers and limited funds. We should look for topics where we could co-sponsor with another division. Military Librarians (soon to be renamed "Government Librarians") and the Aerospace Section of the Engineering Division were noted as possible co-sponsors. The 2004 conference will be in Nashville, Tennessee, and all meetings and the exhibit hall will be in the Gaylord Opryland Hotel, which will also be the official conference hotel.

#### **Old Business**

**Professional Achievement Award** – There were no nominees this year but we hope to see some for the coming year.

**Sources of Information** – Joyce Koeneman at NTL, which has the distribution rights, would like to have the bibliographies in *Sources of Information in Transportation* updated. Not all of the original bibliographies have been completed, however, and there is very little interest on the part of the authors to do an update at this time. Nelda will publicize the availability of *Sources* on the chapter discussion list.

**Adjournment** – The meeting was adjourned at 8:58 on Laura's motion.

Respectfully submitted,  
Rita Evans  
Secretary